

COMMENTS

The enclosed is responsive to the Examiner's Office Action mailed on November 16, 2005. At the time the Examiner mailed the Office Action claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 16, 21-27 and 31-35 were pending. By way of the present response the Applicants have: 1) amended claims 25, 26 and 32; 2) added no new claims; and 3) canceled no claims. As such, claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 16, 21-27 and 31-35 are now pending. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application and the allowance of all claims now presented.

Double Patenting

Claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 16, 21-27, 31-35 stand rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-26 in copending Application 10/718,742. Applicants have submitted herewith a Terminal Disclaimer to overcome the double-patenting rejection.

35 U.S.C. 102 and 103 Rejections

Claims 26, 27 and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Conway, et al, (hereinafter "Conway") U.S. Patent No. 5,278,779. Applicants have amended Claim 26 as discussed in the interview conducted on November 9, 2005. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 26, 27 and 31 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claim 35 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Conway, et al. (hereinafter "Conway") U.S. Patent 5,278,779.

Claim 35 depends from Claim 26 and includes additional features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 35 is allowable over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons provided above, Applicants respectfully submit that the current set of claims are allowable. If the Examiner believes an additional telephone conference would expedite or assist in the allowance of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call Thomas C. Webster at (408) 720-8300.


Authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any charges that may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN

Date:

5/16/06



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